Edge Banding

A common way to cover the exposed edges of plywood in a woodworking project is with solid-wood edgebanding. The problem with this technique, however, is that it always requires some fussing around. You have to rip all the strips to a consistent thickness (which isn't as easy as it sounds). Then, you have to use a lot of clamps to glue the edgebanding in place properly. Even then, if the clamping pressure isn't distributed evenly, the edgebanding can end up with a slightly wavy surface.

▲ **The thin strips of wood covering the exposed plywood edges of the drawers make the joint lines virtually disappear.**

To streamline things a bit, I began to take a different approach when applying edgebanding. The idea is to glue a wide piece of hardwood to the edge of the plywood (Fig. 1). Then rip the edgebanding to final width, as shown in Figs. 2 and 2a.

As for the cutoff, it's glued to the next piece that needs to be edgebanded and ripped to width as before. Simply repeat the process as many times as necessary.

One advantage of this technique is the wide boards acts as a caul that helps distribute clamping pressure evenly. As a result, you don't need as many clamps. Also, ripping the edgebanding to final thickness after it's glued on ensures a straight, flat surface.